

# Feral Cats

While The Oaks team continues to attempt to improve our abandoned and feral cat situation, we really need the help of the community. We can only get so many appointments and only have so much time to put into this program. We need residents to help us with this free program. All you have to do is:

- 1) Call and schedule an appointment, typically 2-4 weeks in advance, maximum 2 cats per appointment
- 2) Set traps the night before your appointment; We will lend you the traps and provide bait food, if available
- 3) Take the cat (s) up to Jackson Creek Veterinary Clinic the morning of your appointment.
- 4) Pick the cat (s) up that same afternoon
- 5) Keep them warm for the night in the trap (or we can store them)
- 6) Release them again the next morning after they have had sufficient time to recover.

If anyone is willing to help with this program, please contact the office.

General info on feral cats –

**Please don't feed or leave feed out for stray and/or feral cats**, that only encourages them to stick around. Although it can be tough for us animal lovers, we are not helping by doing anything nice for these cats, beyond getting them fixed and vaccinated. Feral cats will multiple exponentially if an active program is not worked to control the population and, unfortunately, the in-breeding that occurs results in sick and deformed cats that suffer greatly and can infect healthy residential pets, and humans, that they may come into contact with.

**The ASPCA endorses Trap-Neuter-Return-Monitor (TNRM) as the only proven humane and effective method to manage community cat colonies.**

Female **cats can reproduce** two to three times a year, and their **kittens**, if they survive, will become **feral** without early contact with people. **Cats can** become pregnant as early as 5 months of age, and the number of **cats rapidly** increases without intervention by caring people. A study of 2332 female **cats** revealed an average of 1.4 litters/year with litters averaging three **kittens**/litter. Approximately 75% of **kittens** died or disappeared by six months of age.

**Feral cats** live a dangerous and short existence because of the threats from fighting, disease, and often traffic. They can rarely be domesticated, and may carry diseases such as toxoplasmosis or **cat** scratch fever, both of which affect humans.

Like all species, **the number of feral cats is dependent on their food supply**. We can help reduce feral cat populations by not feeding them, ensuring all garbage containers are sealed and disposed of regularly.

**Ensure all crawl spaces and entries under modular home, to any storage area, etc. are securely sealed** so as not to encourage homing/nesting by cats seeking a comfortable space.

**Repellents: Cats** have very keen senses of smell and taste, and commercial repellents are available to discourage unwanted **cats**. Natural repellents to sprinkle on flowerbeds or gardens include moth balls, ammonia soaked rags, ground mustard, cayenne pepper, citrus peels, coffee grounds, and citrus-based sprays.